7918-a-79 14 C 3186
1-2 (1)

RULES

FOR

Bad Horſemen.

Addreſſed to the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, &c.

——— *Neſcit equo rudis Hærere.*

HOR.

By CHARLES THOMPSON, Eſq;

LONDON:

Printed for J. ROBSON, Bookſeller to her Royal Highneſs the Princeſs Dowager of Wales, in New Bond-ſtreet.

MDCCLXII.

RULES

FOR

Bad Horsemen.

Addressed to the Society for the
Encouragement of Arts, &c.

BRITISH MUSEUM 1847 28 MAR

Nihil quo rudis

Hæret.

Hor.

By CHARLES TILSTON, Esq.

LONDON:

Printed for J. Roycon, Bookseller to
her Royal Highness the Princess
Dowager of Wales, in New Bond-
Street.

MDCCLXII.

TO THE

SOCIETY

FOR THE

Encouragement of Arts, &c.

Gentlemen,

THIS attempt ſeems properly addreſſed to you, as encouragers of any deſign to improve

prove even the leſſer conveniencies, or the amuſements of life. No *invention* is here pretended to; nor other merit, than that of deſiring to eſtabliſh common ſenſe in the room of unexamined maxims which generally miſlead.

Though theory without practice is ineffectual, yet an art not founded on rule

is

is confined to the genius of a ſingle artiſt, and cannot aſcend to perfection by ſteps raiſed from the concurrent diſcoveries of many. Hence it happens that great arts become loſt, and little ones not attained to perfection.

If the following pages ſhall meet with any degree of your approbation, I ſhall

ſhall think my pains have been uſefully imployed.

I am,

Gentlemen,

Your moſt obedient,

And very humble Servant,

C. Thompſon.

RULES FOR Bad Horſemen.

THERE is in this country an almoſt univerſal fondneſs for horſes, and the exerciſe of riding;

ing; yet but few, in compariſon, are tolerable horſemen. The complaints, we hear, of horſes being ungovernable, or performing ill, generally ariſe from the unſkilfulneſs of their riders. The caſe is, we want a *juſt taſte* in riding. No man learns it as an *art*. If a young fellow can ride a fox-chace, or a horſe-race, he immediately conſiders himſelf, and is conſidered by others, as a good horſeman. If he has a horſe which he cannot manage, he will tell you, he deſigns to tame him by hunting: that is, if he can but get him to go forward, he will tire him.

him. But what end does this anſwer? by a week's reſt the horſe becomes as ungovernable as ever; and ſurely, if a man cannot manage his horſe in full ſpirits, he cannot well be ſaid to manage him at all.

Riding in the manage, or at the riding ſchool, is indeed conſidered as an *art*; and there we have profeſſed *maſters* to teach it. But it is looked on as of uſe to military people only; or to thoſe, in whom a ſhewy appearance is made proper and becoming, by their rank in

life. It is ſuppoſed alſo, that all managed horſes are taught motions for parade only; and that their paces are ſpoiled for the road and hunting. Hence riding in the manage is called *riding the great horſe*; and the common opinion is, that nothing of this art can be applied to general uſe. Almoſt every one thinks practice alone will teach to ride: yet if artificial meaſures of motion, and the imitation of a good carriage, will mend even our manner of *walking*, which nature has taught, and conſtant practice improved; why ſhould *riding*, which certainly

tainly is ſtill more an *art*, be ſuppoſed to be eaſily, and ſufficiently attained, without *any* aſſiſtance. Does not daily experience proclaim the contrary? do we not ſee many men, who make a good figure while they ſtand on their legs, appear on horſeback, helpleſs, and awkward? The rowing a wherry ſeems to be what every one might acquire without difficulty; yet they who are inſtructed by rule, row better than thoſe, who have had no inſtruction.

Notwithſtanding this general opinion of the manage, there are

ſome who think it teaches a horſe nothing which will ſpoil his paces, and that he is greatly benefited by it, as he is there put under ſuch a diſcipline, as accuſtoms him to have *no will of his own*, by which means the management of him is made eaſy to an indifferent rider.

Were horſes uſually broken in thus far only in the manage, gentlemen might without great difficulty be taught all that is neceſſary to ride with ſafety, eaſe, and pleaſure, and to make their horſes perform chearfully.

To

To this end, there ſhould be maſters to teach the art of riding on the *hunting* or *common ſaddle*; or the unexperienced horſeman ſhould practiſe a while at the riding-houſe, with a view to get a few general principles, which he may afterwards apply to another manner of riding. Till this is done, ſuch inſtruction may be given to bad horſemen, by rule, as may enable them to ride more ſafely and better than they do at preſent; not knowing that they have any thing to learn. This, in ſome degree, is attempted here. Books in which the

art of riding has been fully and completely taught, have not been calculated for ſo *inferior* a part of a horſeman's education. What is ſaid here, is not therefore deſigned for thoſe who ride *well*, but for thoſe only, who are liable to difficulties and accidents, for want of *common* cautions; and who know not, that by leaving a horſe at ſome liberty, and avoiding to give him pain by a bad management of the bridle, he will go better and more quietly, than under a bad horſeman, who lays all the weight of his arms on his horſe's mouth, and

by

by ſitting awkwardly, not only becomes an uneaſy burthen to himſelf, and his horſe, but rides in continual danger of a fall.

In the firſt place, every horſe ſhould be accuſtomed to ſtand ſtill, when he is mounted. One would imagine this might be readily granted; yet we ſee how much the contrary is practiſed. When a gentleman mounts at a livery-ſtable, the groom takes the horſe by the bit, which he bends tight round his under jaw: the horſe ſtriving to go on, is forced back; advancing again, he frets,

as

as he is again ſtopped ſhort, and hurt by the manner of holding him. The rider, in the mean time, mounting without the bridle, or at leaſt holding it but ſlightly, is helped to it by the groom, who being thoroughly employed with the horſe's fluttering, has at the ſame time both bridle and ſtirrup to give. Would not this confuſion be prevented, if every horſe was taught to ſtand ſtill when he is mounted? Forbid your groom therefore, when he rides your horſe to water, to throw himſelf over him from a horſe-block, and kick

him

him with his leg, even before he is fairly upon him. This wrong manner of mounting is what chiefly teaches your horſe the vicious habit, againſt which we are here warning. On the other hand, a conſtant practiſe of mounting in the proper manner is all that is neceſſary to prevent a horſe's going on, till the rider is quite adjuſted in his ſaddle.

The next thing neceſſary therefore is, that the rider ſhould mount properly. The common method is, to ſtand near the croup, or hinder part of the horſe, with the

the bridle held very long in the right hand. By this manner of holding the bridle, before you mount, you are liable to be kicked; and when you are mounted, your horſe may go on ſome time, or play what gambols he pleaſes, before the rein is ſhort enough in your hand, to prevent him. It is common likewiſe, for an awkward rider, as ſoon as his foot is in the ſtirrup, to throw himſelf with all his force, to gain his ſeat; which he cannot do, till he hath firſt overbalanced himſelf on one ſide or the other: he will then wriggle into

into it by degrees. The way to mount with eaſe and ſafety, is, to ſtand rather before than behind the ſtirrup. In this poſture take the bridle ſhort, and the mane together in your left hand, helping yourſelf to the ſtirrup with your right, ſo that your toe may not touch the horſe in mounting. When your left foot is in the ſtirrup, move on your right, till you face the ſide of the horſe, looking acroſs over the ſaddle. Then with your right hand, graſp the hinder part of the ſaddle, and with that and your left, which holds the mane

and

and bridle, lift yourſelf upright on your left foot. Remain thus a mere inſtant on your ſtirrup, only ſo as to divide the action into two motions. While you are in this poſture, you have a ſure hold with both hands, and are at liberty, either to get ſafely down, or to throw your leg over, and gain your ſeat. By this deliberate motion likewiſe you avoid, what every good horſeman would endeavour to avoid, putting your horſe into a flutter.

When you diſmount, hold the bridle and mane together in your left

left hand, as when you mounted; put your right hand on the pommel of the ſaddle, to raiſe yourſelf; throw your leg back over the horſe, graſp the hinder part of the ſaddle with your right hand, remain a moment on your ſtirrup, and in every reſpect, diſmount as you mounted; only what was the firſt motion when you mounted, becomes the laſt in diſmounting. Remember, not to bend your right knee in diſmounting, leaſt your ſpur ſhould rub againſt the horſe.

It may be next recommended

to

to hold your bridle at a convenient length. Sit ſquare, and let not the purchaſe of the bridle pull forward your ſhoulder; but keep your body *even*, as it would be, if each hand held a rein. Hold your reins with the whole graſp of your hand, dividing them with your little finger. Let your hand be perpendicular; your thumb will then be uppermoſt, and placed on the bridle. Bend your wriſt a little outward, and when you pull the bridle, raiſe your hand toward your breaſt, and the lower part of the palm rather more than the upper. Let

 the

the bridle be at ſuch a length in your hand, as if the horſe ſhould ſtumble, you may be able to raiſe his head, and ſupport it by the ſtrength of your arms, and the weight of your body thrown backward. If you hold the rein too long, you are ſubject to fall backward, as your horſe riſes.

If, knowing your horſe perfectly well, you think a tight rein unneceſſary, advance your arm a little (but not your ſhoulder) towards the horſe's head, and keep your uſual length of rein. By this means, you have a check

upon your horſe, while you indulge him.

If you ride with a curb, make it a rule, to hook on the chain yourſelf: the moſt quiet horſe may bring his rider into danger, ſhould the curb hurt him. If in fixing the curb, you turn the chain to the right, the links will unfold themſelves, and then oppoſe a farther turning. Put on the chain looſe enough to hang down on the horſe's under lip, ſo that it may not riſe and preſs his jaw, till the reins of the bridle are moderately pulled.

If

If your horſe has been uſed to ſtand ſtill when he is mounted, there will be no occaſion for a groom to hold him: but if he does, ſuffer him not to touch the reins, but that part of the bridle which comes down the cheek of the horſe. He cannot then interfere with the management of the reins, which belongs to the rider only; and holding a horſe by the curb (which is ever painful to him) is evidently improper, when he is to ſtand ſtill.

Another thing to be remembered is, not to ride with your

arms and elbows as high as your ſhoulders; nor to let them ſhake up and down with the motion of the horſe. The poſture is unbecoming, and the weight of the arms (and of the body too if the rider does not ſit ſtill) acts in continual jirks on the jaw of the horſe, which muſt give him pain, and make him unquiet, if he has a tender mouth, or any ſpirit.

Bad riders wonder why horſes are gentle as ſoon as they are mounted by ſkilful ones, though their ſkill *ſeems* unemployed: the reaſon is, the horſe goes at

his eaſe, yet finds all his motions watched; which he has ſagacity enough to diſcover. Such a rider hides his whip, if he finds his horſe is afraid of it, and keeps his legs from his ſides, if he finds he dreads the ſpur.

As you are not to keep your arms and elbows high, and in motion; ſo you are not to rivet them to your ſides, but let them fall eaſy. One may, at a diſtance, diſtinguiſh a genteel horſeman, from an awkward one; the firſt ſits ſtill, and appears of a piece with his horſe; the latter ſeems flying off at all points.

It is often ſaid with emphaſis, that ſuch a one has no *ſeat* on horſeback; and it means, not only that he does not ride well, but that he does not ſit on the right part of the horſe. To have a *good ſeat*, is to ſit on that part of the horſe, which, as he ſprings, is the center of motion; and from which of courſe, any weight would be with moſt difficulty ſhaken. As in the riſing and falling of a board placed in æquilibrio, the center will always be moſt at reſt; the true ſeat will be found in that part of your ſaddle, into which your body would

would naturally ſlide, if you rode without ſtirrups; and is only to be preſerved by a proper poiſe of the body, though the generality of riders imagine it is to be done by the graſp of the thighs and knees. The rider ſhould conſider himſelf as united to his horſe in this point, and when ſhaken from it, endeavour to reſtore the balance.

Perhaps the mention of the two extremes of a bad ſeat may help to deſcribe the true one. The one is, when the rider ſits very far back on the ſaddle, ſo

that his weight preſſes the loins of the horſe; the other, when his body hangs forward over the pommel of the ſaddle. The firſt, may be ſeen practiſed by grooms, when they ride with their ſtirrups affectedly ſhort; the latter, by fearful horſemen on the leaſt flutter of the horſe. Every *good* rider has, even on the hunting ſaddle, as *determined* a place for his thighs, as can be determined for him by the barrs of a demi-peak. Indeed there is no difference between the ſeat of either: only, as in the firſt you ride with ſhorter ſtirrups, your body

body will be conſequently more behind your knees.

To have a good ſeat yourſelf, your ſaddle muſt ſit well. To fix a preciſe *rule* might be difficult: it may be a *direction*, to have your ſaddle preſs as nearly as poſſible on that part, which we have deſcribed as the point of union between the man and horſe, however ſo as not to obſtruct the motion of the horſe's ſhoulders. Place yourſelf in the middle or loweſt part of it: ſit erect; but with as little conſtraint, as in your ordinary ſitting. The eaſe

of

of action marks the gentleman: you may repoſe yourſelf, but not lounge. The ſet and ſtudied erectneſs acquired in the riding-houſe, by thoſe whoſe deportment is not eaſy, appears ungenteel, and unnatural.

If your horſe ſtops ſhort, or endeavours by riſing and kicking to unſeat you, bend not your body forward, as many do in thoſe circumſtances: that motion throws the breech backward, and you off your fork or twiſt, and out of your ſeat; whereas, the advancing the lower part of your body,

and

and bending back the upper part and ſhoulders, is the method both to keep your ſeat, and to recover it when loſt. The bending your body back, and that in a great degree, is the greateſt ſecurity in *flying* leaps; it is a ſecurity too, when your horſe leaps *ſtanding*. The horſe's riſing does not try the rider's ſeat; the laſh of his hind legs is what ought chiefly to be guarded againſt, and is beſt done by the body's being greatly inclined back. Stiffen not your legs or thighs, and let your body be pliable in the loins, like the coachman's on his box. This

looſe

looſe manner of ſitting will elude every rough motion of the horſe; whereas the fixture of the knees, ſo commonly laid a ſtreſs on, will in great ſhocks conduce to the violence of the fall.

Was the cricket player, when the ball is ſtruck with the greateſt velocity, to hold his hand firm and fixed when he receives it, the hand would be bruiſed, or perhaps the bones fractured by the reſiſtance. To obviate this accident, he therefore gradually yields his hand to the motion of the ball for a certain diſtance;

and

and thus by a due mixture of oppoſition and obedience catches it without ſuſtaining the leaſt injury. The caſe is exactly the ſame in riding: the ſkilful horſeman will recover his poiſe, by giving ſome way to the motion, and the ignorant horſeman will be flung out of his ſeat, by endeavouring to be fixed.

Stretch not out your legs before you: this will puſh you againſt the back of the ſaddle; neither gather up your knees, like a man riding on a pack, this throws your thighs upwards: each practiſe

tiſe unſeats you. Keep your legs ſtraight down, and ſit not on the moſt fleſhy part of the thighs, but turn them inwards, ſo as to bring in your knees and toes; and it is more ſafe to ride with the ball of the foot preſſing on the ſtirrup, than with the ſtirrup as far back as the heel; for the preſſure of the heel being in that caſe behind the ſtirrup, keeps the thighs down.

When you find your thighs thrown upwards, widen your knees to get them and the upper part of your fork lower

down

down on the horſe. Graſp the ſaddle with the hollow or inner part of your thighs, but not more than juſt to aſſiſt the balance of your body: this will alſo enable you to keep your ſpurs from the horſe's ſides, and to bring your toes in, without that affected and uſeleſs manner of bringing them in, practiſed by many. Sink your heels ſtraight down, for while your heels and thighs keep down, you cannot fall: this, (aided with the bend of the back) gives the ſecurity of a ſeat, to thoſe who bear themſelves up in their ſtirrups in a ſwift gallop,

or

or in the alternate riſing and falling in a full trot.

Let your ſeat determine the length of your ſtirrups, rather than the ſtirrups your ſeat. If more preciſion is requiſite, let your ſtirrups (in the hunting ſaddle) be of ſuch a length, as that when you ſtand in them, there may be the breadth of four fingers between your ſeat and the ſaddle.

It would greatly aſſiſt a learner, if he would practiſe riding in a large circle, without ſtir-

rups,

rups, keeping his face looking on the outward part of the circle, ſo as hardly to ſee the horſe's head; and his ſhoulder, which is towards the center of the circle, very forward. By this means, you learn to balance your body, and keep a true ſeat, independent of your ſtirrups: you may probably likewiſe eſcape a fall, ſhould you at any time loſe them, by being accidentally ſhaken from your ſeat.

As the ſeat in ſome meaſure depends on the ſaddle, it may not be amiſs to obſerve, that becauſe

a ſaddle with a high pommel is thought dangerous, the other extreme prevails, and the pommel is ſcarce allowed to be higher than the middle of the ſaddle. The ſaddle ſhould lie as near the back bone, as can be, without hurting the horſe; for the neaſer you ſit to his back, the better ſeat you have. If it does ſo, it is plain the pommel muſt riſe enough to ſecure the withers from preſſure: therefore, a horſe whoſe withers are higher than common, requires a higher pommel. If to avoid this, you make the ſaddle of a more ſtraight line,

the

the inconvenience ſpoken of follows; you ſit too much above the horſe's back; nor can the ſaddle form a proper ſeat. There ſhould be no ridge from the button at the ſide of the pommel, to the back part of the ſaddle. That line alſo ſhould be a little concave, for your thighs to lie at eaſe. In ſhort, a ſaddle ought to be, as nearly as poſſible, as if cut out of the horſe.

When you want your horſe to move forward, raiſe his head a little, and touch him gently with your whip; or elſe, preſs the

calves of your legs againſt his ſides. If he does not move faſt enough, preſs them with more force, and ſo, till the ſpur juſt touches him. By this practice, he will (if he has any ſpirit) move upon the leaſt preſſure of the leg. Never ſpur him by a kick; but if it be neceſſary to ſpur him briſkly, keep your heels cloſe to his ſides, and ſlacken their force, as he becomes obedient.

When your horſe attempts to be vicious, take each rein ſeparate, one in each hand, and advancing

vancing your arms forward, hold him very ſhort. In this caſe, it is common for the rider to pull him hard, with his arms low; but the horſe by this means having his head low too, has it more in his power to throw out his heels: whereas, if his head be raiſed very high, and his noſe thrown out a little, which is conſequent, he can neither riſe before, nor behind; becauſe he can give himſelf neither of thoſe motions, without having his head at liberty. A plank placed in æquilibrio, cannot riſe at one end, unleſs it ſinks at the other.

If your horſe is headſtrong, pull not with one continued pull, but ſtop, and back him often, juſt ſhaking the reins, and making little repeated pulls till he obeys. Horſes are ſo accuſtomed to bear on the bit, when they go forward, that they are diſcouraged if the rider will not let them do ſo.

If a horſe is looſe-necked, he will throw up his head at a continued pull; in which ſituation, the rider ſeeing the front of his face, can have no power over him. When your horſe does thus,

thus, drop your hand, and give the bridle play, and he will of courſe drop his head again into it's proper place: while it is coming down, make a ſecond gentle pull, and you will find his mouth. With a little practiſe, this is done almoſt inſtantaneouſly; and this method will ſtop, in the diſtance of a few yards, a horſe, which will run away with thoſe who pull at him with *all* their might. Almoſt every one muſt have obſerved, that when a horſe feels himſelf pulled with the bridle, even when he is going gently; he often miſ-

takes what was deſigned to *ſtop* him, as a direction to bear on the bit, and to *go faſter*.

Keep your horſe's head high, that he may raiſe his neck, and creſt; play a little with the rein, and move the bit in his mouth, that he may not preſs on it, in one conſtant and continued manner. Be not afraid of raiſing his head too high; he will naturally be too ready to bring it down, and tire your arms with it's weight, on the leaſt abatement of his metle. When you feel him heavy, ſtop him, and make

make him go back a few paces: thus you break by degrees his propenſity to preſs on his bridle.

You ought not to be pleaſed (though many are) with a round neck, and a head drawn in towards his breaſt: let your horſe carry his head bridling in, provided he carries it high, and his neck arching *upwards*; but if his neck bends *downwards*, his figure is bad, his ſight is too near his toes, he leans on the bridle, and you have no command over him. If he goes preſſing but lightly on his bridle, he is the more ſure-footed,

footed, and goes pleaſanter; as your wriſt only may guide him. If he hangs down his head, and makes you ſupport the weight of that, and his neck with your arms, bearing on his fore legs, (which is called *being on his ſhoulders)* he will ſtrike his toes againſt the ground, and ſtumble.

If your horſe is heavy upon his bit, tie him every day, for an hour or two, with his tail to the manger, and his head as high as you can make him lift it, by a rein on each poſt of the ſtall, tied

tied to each ring of the ſnaffle bit.

Horſe-breakers and grooms have a great propenſity to bring a horſe's head *down*, and ſeem to have no ſeat without a ſtrong hold by the bridle. They know indeed, that the head ſhould yield to the reins, and the neck form an arch; but do not take the proper pains to make it arch *upward*. A temporary effect of attempting to raiſe a horſe's head, may perhaps be making him puſh out his noſe. They will here tell you, that his head is too high

high already; whereas, it is not the diſtance from his *noſe*, but from the *top* of his head, to the ground, which determines the head to be high or low. Beſides, although the fault is ſaid to be in the manner of carrying the head, it ſhould rather be ſaid to be in that of the neck; for if the neck was raiſed, the head would be more in the poſition of one ſet on a well formed neck.

The deſign therefore of lifting up the head, is to raiſe the neck, and *thereby* bring in the

the head; for even while the bridle makes the ſame line from the rider's hand to the bit, the horſe's noſe may be either drawn in, or thruſt out, according as his neck is raiſed or depreſſed. Inſtead of what has been here recommended, we uſually ſee colts broke with their heads cave-ſoned very low, their necks ſtiff, and not in the leaſt ſuppled. When the breaking-tackle is left off, and they are mounted for the road, having more food and reſt, they frequently plunge, and a ſecond breaking becomes neceſ-ſary. Then, as few gentlemen

can

can manage their own horſes, they are put into the hands of grooms, from whom they learn a variety of bad habits.

If on the other hand, your horſe carries his head (or rather his noſe) too high, he generally makes ſome amends by moving his ſhoulders lightly, and going ſafely. Attend to the cauſe of this fault. Some horſes have their necks ſet ſo low on their ſhoulders, that they bend firſt down, then upwards, like a ſtag's. Some have the upper line of their necks, from their

their ears to their withers, too ſhort. A head of this ſort cannot poſſibly bend inwards, and form an arch, becauſe the vertebræ (or neck bones) are too ſhort to admit of flexure; for in long and ſhort necked horſes the number of vertebræ is the ſame. In ſome, the jaw is ſo thick, that it meets the neck, and the head by this means has not room to bend. On the other hand, ſome have the under line from the jaw to the breaſt, ſo ſhort, that the neck cannot riſe.

In all theſe caſes you may gain a *little* by a nice hand with an eaſy bit; but no curb, martingale, or other forcible method, will *teach* a horſe to carry his head or neck, in a poſture which nature has made uneaſy to him. By trying to pull in his noſe, farther than he can bear, you will add a bad habit to nature. You could not indeed *contrive* a more effectual method, to make him continually toſs his noſe up, and throw his foam over you.

The rule already given to ride

a

a looſe-necked horſe, will be a proper one for all light-mouthed horſes: one caution being added, which is, always to ſearch whether his ſaddle, or girths may not in ſome way pinch him, and whether the bit may not hurt his lip by being too high in his mouth: becauſe whenever he frets from either of theſe cauſes, his head will not be ſteady.

It is a common cuſtom, to be always pulling at the bridle, as if to ſet off to advantage either the ſpirit of the horſe, or the ſkill of the rider. Our horſes there-

fore are taught to hold their heads low, and pull ſo, as to bear up the rider from the ſaddle, ſtanding in his ſtirrups, even in the gentleſt gallop: how very improper this is, we are experimentally convinced, when we happen to meet with a horſe which gallops otherwiſe. We immediately ſay, he canters excellently, and find the eaſe and pleaſure of his motion. When horſes are deſigned for the race, and ſwiftneſs is the only thing conſidered, the method may be a good one.

It

It is not to be wondered, that *Dealers* are always pulling at their horſes; that they have the ſpur conſtantly in their ſides, and are at the ſame time continually checking the rein: by this means they make them bound, and champ the bit, while their rage has the appearance of ſpirit. Theſe people ride with their arms ſpread, and very low on the ſhoulders of their horſes: this method makes them ſtretch their necks, and gives a better appearance to their fore-hands; it conceals alſo a thick jaw, which if the head was up, would prevent

its yielding to the bit; it hides likewiſe the ewe-neck, which would otherwiſe ſhew itſelf. Indeed, if you have a horſe unſteady to the bit, formed with a naturally heavy head, or one which carries his noſe obſtinately in the air, you muſt find his mouth where you can, and make the beſt of him.

Many horſes are taught to ſtart, by whipping them for ſtarting. How is it poſſible they can know it is deſigned as a puniſhment? In the riding-houſe, you teach your horſe to riſe up before, and

to

to ſpring and laſh out his hinder legs, by whipping him when tied between two pillars, with his head a little at liberty. If he underſtood this to be a puniſhment for doing ſo, he would not by that method learn to do it. He ſeems to be in the ſame manner *taught* to ſpring and fly when he is frightened. Moſt horſes would go quietly paſt an object they were beginning to fly from, if their riders, inſtead of gathering up their bridles, and ſhewing themſelves ſo ready, ſhould throw the reins looſe upon their necks.

When a horſe ſtarts at any thing on one ſide, moſt riders turn him out of the road, to make him go up to what he ſtarts at: if he does not get the better of his fear, or readily comply, he generally goes paſt the object, making with his hinder parts, or croup, a great circle out of the road; whereas, he ſhould learn to keep ſtrait on, without minding objects on either ſide.

If he ſtarts at any thing on the left, hold his head high, and keep it ſtrait in the road, pulling it *from* looking at the thing he

he ſtarts at, and keeping your right leg hard preſſed againſt his ſide, towards his flank: he will then go ſtrait along the road. By this method, and by turning his head a little more, he may be forced with his croup cloſe up to what frighted him; for as his head is pulled one way, his croup neceſſarily turns the other. Always avoid a quarrel with your horſe, if you can; if he is apt to ſtart, you will find occaſions enough to exerciſe his obedience, when what he ſtarts at lies directly in his way, and

you *muſt* make him paſs: If he is not ſubject to ſtart, you ſhould not contend with him about a trifle.

Let me juſt obſerve, that this rule in going paſt an object may perhaps be a little irregular in a managed horſe; which will always obey the leg: but even ſuch a horſe, if he is really afraid, and not reſtive, it may not be amiſs to make him look another way: unleſs the object be ſomething you would particularly accuſtom him to the ſight of.

The

The caſe will alſo be different, with a horſe whoſe fear is owing to his being not uſed to objects; but ſuch a one is not to be rode by any horſeman to whom theſe rules are directed: the ſtarting here meant ariſes merely from the horſe's being pamper'd, and ſpringing through livelineſs.

The notion of the neceſſity of making a horſe go immediately up to every thing he is afraid of, and not ſuffering him to become maſter of his rider, ſeems to be in general carried too far. It is an approved and good me-

thod

thod to conquer a horſe's fear of the ſound of a drum, by beating one near him at the time of feeding him: this not only familiariſes the noiſe to him, but makes it pleaſant, as a forerunner of his meat; whereas, if he was whipped up to it, he might perhaps ſtart at it, as long as he lived. Might not this be applied to his ſtarting at other things, and ſhew that it would be better to ſuffer him (provided he does not turn back) to go a little from, and avoid an object he has a diſlike to, and to accuſtom him to it by degrees, convincing him as it were that

it

it will not hurt him; than to puniſh him, quarrel with him, and perhaps ſubmit to his will at laſt, while you inſiſt on his overcoming his fear in an inſtant? If he ſees a like object again, it is probable he will recollect his dread, and arm himſelf to be diſobedient.

We are apt to ſuppoſe, that a horſe fears nothing ſo much as his rider; but may he not, in many circumſtances, be afraid of inſtant deſtruction? of being cruſhed? of being drowned? of falling down a precipice? is it a wonder

that

that a horſe ſhould be afraid of a loaded waggon? may not the hanging load ſeem to threaten the falling on him? there cannot be a rule more general, than, in ſuch a caſe, to ſhew him there is room for him to paſs. This is done by turning his head a very little from the carriage, and preſſing your leg, which is fartheſt from it, againſt his ſide.

A horſe is not to ſtop without a ſign from his rider—Is it not then probable that when he is driven up to a carriage he ſtarts at, he conceives himſelf obliged either

either to attack or run againſt it? Can he underſtand the rider's ſpurring him with his face directed to it, as a ſign for him to paſs it? That a horſe is eaſily alarmed for his face and eyes; (he will even catch back his head from a hand going to careſs him) that he will not go with any force, face to face, even to another horſe; (if in his power to ſtop) and that he ſees perfectly ſideways, may be uſeful hints for the treatment of horſes, with regard to ſtarting.

Though you ought not to whip

a horſe for ſtarting, there can be no good effect from clapping his neck with your hand, to encourage him. If one took any notice of his ſtarting, it ſhould be rather with ſome tone of voice which he uſually underſtood as an expreſſion of diſlike to what he is doing; for there is *oppoſition* mixed with his ſtarting, and a horſe will ever repeat what he finds hath foiled his rider.

Notwithſtanding the direction above given, of not preſſing a horſe up to a carriage he ſtarts at, yet if one which you appre-

hend

hend will frighten him, meets you at a narrow part of the road; when you have once let him know he is to paſs it, be ſure you remain determined, and preſs him on. Do this more eſpecially, when part of the carriage has already paſt you; for if, when he is frightened, he is accuſtomed to go back, and turn round, he will certainly do it, if he finds, by your hand ſlackening, and legs not preſſing, that you are irreſolute; and this at the moſt dangerous point of time, when the wheels of the carriage take him as he turns. Remember

ber not to touch the curb rein at this time, it will certainly check him. Ride with a ſnaffle, and uſe your curb, if you have one, only occaſionally. Chuſe your ſnaffle full and thick in the mouth, eſpecially at the ends, to which the reins are faſtened. Moſt of them are made too ſmall and long; they cut the horſe's mouth, and bend back over the bars of his jaw, working like pincers.

The management of the curb is too nice a matter to enter on here, farther, than to preſcribe great caution in the uſe

of it: a turn of the wriſt, rather than the weight of your arm, ſhould be applied to it. The elaſticity of a rod, when it hath hooked a fiſh, may give you ſome idea of the proper play of a horſe's head on his bridle; his ſpirit and his pliableneſs are both marked by it.

A horſe ſhould never be put to do any thing in a curb, which he is not ready at: you may force him, or pull his head any way, with a ſnaffle; but a curb acts *only* in a ſtrait line. It is

true, that a horſe will be turned out of one track into another by a curb, but it is becauſe he knows it as a *ſignal*. When he is put to draw a chair, and does not underſtand the neceſſity he is then under of taking a larger ſweep, when he turns, you frequently ſee him *reſtive*, as it is then called; but put him on a ſnaffle, or buckle the rein to that part of the bit, which does not curb him; and the horſe ſubmits to be pulled about, till he underſtands what is deſired of him. Theſe directions

tions ſuppoſe your horſe to have ſpirit, and a good mouth: if he has not, you muſt take him as he is, and ride him with ſuch a bit, as you find moſt eaſy to yourſelf.

When you ride a journey, be not ſo attentive to your horſe's nice carriage of himſelf, as to your encouragement of him, and keeping him in good humour. Raiſe his head; but if he flags, you may indulge him with bearing a little more upon the bit, than you would ſuffer in an air-

ing. If a horſe is lame, tender-footed, or tired, he naturally hangs upon his bridle. On a journey therefore, his mouth will depend greatly on his ſtrength, and the goodneſs of his feet. Be then very careful about his feet, and let not a farrier ſpoil them. You will be enabled to keep them from danger, by a few directions, which ſhall not be very digreſſive.

When your horſe is ſhod, ſuffer not his feet to be hollowed, but order them to be pared quite

quite flat, and moſt at the toe. There is generally a finiſhing ſtroke, for the ſake of neatneſs, given by a farrier, at the end of the horn of the hoof, above the ſhoe; this is the *moſt uſeful* part of the hoof, and whatever is taken from it, it is like paring the bottom of a poſt, which of conſequence weakens it in the moſt eſſential way. Let not the heel nor frog be pared, more than to take off what is ragged or broken. (It is ſtill more ſafe to do that yourſelf at your leiſure with a knife,

than to truſt a farrier to pare it in the leaſt.)

If this method was practiſed, horſes would be leſs liable to corns, as the hoof in that caſe would eſcape the preſſure it is expoſed to in the uſual manner of ſhoeing, and preſſure ſeems undoubtedly to be the cauſe of corns. This would ſecure them too againſt wounds from pointed nails, which cannot pierce the fleſh of the foot, through a frog in its natural ſtate. Such an one is of a ſtill farther uſe; it keeps the two diviſions of the heel

heel broad and aſunder. Yet farriers do juſt the contrary, and pare the frog very thin, in order to *open* the heel, as they term it; by which it is plain they ſee the neceſſity of keeping the heel broad and open, though they prevent the very effect they aim at. They alſo make another miſtake, in driving nails very backward toward the heel, where the horn is ſoft and ſenſible; and none at the toe, where every horſe has a ſubſtance of horn ſufficient to bear them. — Few, except ſtoned

horſes, have high heels; when they have, the whole foot muſt be pared flat, but the frog by no means hollowed out. If a horſe has a low heel, that is, ſuch a one as lets the fleſhy part of the heel come too near the ground, let him be pared only at the toe. A horſe with ſhort paſterns requires a ſhorter ſhoe, becauſe a long ſhoe brings his heels more back than the unpliableneſs of his paſterns will admit, without ſome degree of pain. In general, a ſhort ſhoe may poſſibly ſometimes expoſe a

horſe

horſe to little accidental lameneſſes, but a long ſhoe with the nails far back near his heels, will in the end contract and ruin them. It is plain from experience, that all low-heeled horſes go beſt when they have been long ſhod; that is, when the foot is grown longer, and the ſhoe in conſequence is become proportionably ſhorter, and ſits more forward on the foot.

Very few, although practiſed in riding, know they have any power

power over a horſe, but by the bridle; or any uſe for the ſpur, except to make him go forward. A little experience will teach them a farther uſe. If the left ſpur touches him (and he is at the ſame time prevented from going forward) he has a ſign, which he will ſoon underſtand, to move ſideways to the right. In the ſame manner to the left, if the right ſpur is cloſed to him: he afterwards, through fear of the ſpur, obeys a touch of the leg. In the ſame manner as a horſe moves his croup from one ſide of the ſtall

to

to the other, when any one ſtrikes him with his hand. In ſhort, his croup is guided by the leg, as his head is by the bridle. He will never diſobey the leg, unleſs he becomes reſtive. By this means, you will have a far greater power over him; he will move ſideways, if you cloſe one leg to him, and ſtrait forward, if both: even when he ſtands ſtill, your legs held near him will keep him on the watch, and with the ſlighteſt, unſeen motion of the bridle upwards, he will raiſe his head, and ſhew his forehand to advantage.

On

On this uſe of the legs of the rider, and guidance of the croup of the horſe, are founded all the *Airs* (as the riding-maſters expreſs themſelves) which are taught in the manage; the paſſage, or ſide motion of troopers to cloſe or open their files, and indeed all their evolutions. But the convenience of ſome degree of this diſcipline for common uſe, is the reaſon of mentioning it here. It is chiefly uſeful when a horſe ſtarts. When he is beginning to fly to one ſide, your leg on the ſide he is flying

ing to, ſtops his ſpring immediately. He goes paſt what he ſtarted at, keeping ſtrait on, or as you chuſe to direct him, and he will not fly back from any thing, if you preſs him with both legs. You keep his haunches under him, going down a hill; help him on the ſide of a bank; more eaſily avoid the wheel of a carriage, and approach more gracefully and nearer to the ſide of a coach, or horſeman. When a pampered horſe curvets irregularly, and twiſts his body to and fro, turn his head either

either to the right or left, or both alternately, (but without letting him move out of the track) and preſs your leg to the oppoſite ſide: your horſe cannot then ſpring on his hind legs, to one ſide, becauſe your leg prevents him; nor to the other, becauſe his head looks that way, and a horſe does not ſtart and ſpring to the ſide on which he looks.

Theſe rules and obſervations may perhaps convey ſome idea, though but an imperfect one, to

to bad riders, of that *ſleight*, which makes horſes obedient, when they would reſiſt *force*; and may ſerve to ſhew them, that ſomething more than what the horſe learns from his *Breaker*, is neceſſary to make him tract-ab'e.

Colts at firſt are taught to *bear* a bit, and by degrees to *pull* at it. If they did not preſs it, they could not be guided by it. By degrees they find their necks ſtronger than the arms of a man; and that they are ca-

pable

pable of making great oppoſition, and often of foiling their riders. Then is the time to make them ſupple and pliant in every part. The part which of all others requires moſt this pliancy, is the neck. Hence the metaphor of *ſtiffnecked* for *diſobedient*. A horſe cannot move his head, but with the muſcles of his neck: this may be called his helm; it guides his courſe, changes and directs his motion.

To ſhew the uſe of this pliancy in *every* part and limb of

of the horſe, would be beyond the deſign of theſe few leſſons, directed only to the *unexperienced* horſeman. *His* idea of ſuppleneſs need only be, that of an ability and readineſs in a horſe to move every limb, on a ſign given him by the hands or legs of his rider; as alſo, to bend his body, and move in a ſhort compaſs, quick and collected within himſelf, ſo as inſtantly to be able to perform any other motion.

If the few rules laid down here,

ſeem inſufficient to the end propoſed; at leaſt let me hope they will convince the young horſeman that *ſome* rules are neceſſary: and thus convinced, let him apply to abler maſters in the art for more ſufficient inſtruction.

FINIS.

ERRATA.

PAGE 41. line 12. read *ſight*. p. 42. l. 6. read *fore-legs*. p. 56. l. 12. dele the word *him*.